

INTERACTIVE TREADMILL

This invention claims the benefit of the U. S. Provisional application 60/292,954 filed on June 6, 2001.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a device for an existing treadmill that may either be built into the treadmill or added as an accessory, and which allows the user to access the Internet while using the treadmill.

Treadmills have long been used to provide exercise to a user, usually indoors. Many of the treadmills are powered to move the foot pad or tread on which the user walks or runs. In one earlier invention, the treadmill had a control box which responded to the position of the user on the treadmill.

One exercise invention, a step exerciser, had a television attached to the front of the exerciser.

Another treadmill related invention has a desk which is placed over the front portion of the treadmill.

Still another invention discloses a computer which is adapted to be attached to a treadmill.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

Exercise devices are known in the prior art. For example, U.S. Patent 1,919,627 to **FitzGerald** discloses a treadmill with a control box which responds to the position of the user on the treadmill.

U.S. Patent 5,810,696 to **Webb** discloses a step exerciser which has a television attached to the front of the exerciser.

U.S. Patent 5,813,947 to **Densmore** discloses a desk which is placed over the front portion of the treadmill.

U.S. Patent 5,984,839 to **Corkum** discloses a computer which is adapted to be attached to a treadmill.

In the present invention a built-in component, or an add-on accessory, is combined with a conventional treadmill to allow a user to access the Internet while exercising. The add-on accessory, or built -in component, comprises a platform for supporting a computer with supporting brackets attached to the treadmill and computer. These brackets allow the platform to be vertically adjusted and angled relative to the treadmill.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to an accessory or built-in component that is mounted to a conventional treadmill to allow the user access to the Internet while exercising on the treadmill.

It is the primary object of the present invention to provide for an improved treadmill which allows the user to both exercise and access the Internet at the same time.

Another object is to provide for such an accessory whether attached to or built into the treadmill, wherein a computer keyboard is supported by a platform with adjustment brackets interconnecting the treadmill to the platform.

These and other objects and advantages of the present invention will become apparent to readers from a consideration of the ensuing description and the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a top view of a built-in platform for a conventional treadmill which supports a computer keyboard.

FIG. 2 is a side view of the **FIG. 1** platform.

FIG. 3 is a side view of an add-on accessory platform showing the supporting brackets for the platform.

FIG. 4 is a bottom view of the **FIG. 3** platform showing four bracket holders.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

FIG. 1 is a top view of the platform **1** which supports the computer keyboard **3**, shown in dotted line format, and the various operator controls and readouts gauges **7**, **15**, **17** for the treadmill. The platform may be built into the existing treadmill during the manufacturing process and sold with the treadmill. The platform **1** consists of two generally flat surfaces **19**, **21** joined together at an angle (see **FIG. 2**) with the upper surface having the conventional controls and readouts gauges **7**, **9**, **13**, **15**, **17** normally associated with a power driven treadmill. Among these components are the gauge cluster **7**, the up/down controls **9**, to change the elevation of the movable treadmill mat **11** (partially, shown in dotted line format), the speed controls **13** for increasing or decreasing the speed of rotation of the treadmill mat **11**, the readout **15** to indicate the angular orientation of the treadmill surface with respect to the ground, and the readout **17** giving the distance in miles a user has walked or run during the exercise session. All of the controls and gauges on the upper part **19** of the platform **1** are conventional in design and may vary depending on the manufacturer of the

treadmill and the particular controls and features incorporated into its design.

On the lower horizontally disposed portion **21** of the platform **1** is a surface adapted to receive the conventional computer keyboard **3** (some of whose keys are shown) and its associated mouse pad and mouse **23**. It should be noted that the above components are given merely for illustrational purposes, and other components such as, but not limited to, a trackball could also be used by the user to access the internet. The computer keyboard **3** is operatively connected to the CPU (central processing unit) via cable **25** and the CPU is connected to the Internet via a telephone line or the like. Since these components are conventional, no description is necessary or will be given. Thus, a user of the computer, using the keyboard **3**, may have access to the Internet while the treadmill foot pad **11** rotates to provide exercise for the user.

At the lower center of platform **21** are control switches **27** used to control the treadmill **11** in an emergency situation, or just to shut off the electrical power used to move the treadmill. The control switches **27** are conventional in design and may include a tether attached to the user which will be dislodged and stop the treadmill should the user fall.

FIG. 2 is a side view of the **FIG. 1** platform **1**. As indicated, this platform could be built into and sold with the treadmill. The upwardly slanting angular configuration of the upper platform portion **19** relative to the lower horizontal portion **21** is more clearly visible in this view. The conventional computer keyboard **3** may sit in a

recessed portion of the lower horizontal portion **21** and is shown in dotted line format. The emergency and other controls **27** extend slightly out from the lower bottom of portion **21** to allow for access by a user of the treadmill.

FIG. 3 is a side view of an add-on accessory platform **1'** which may be added on to the frame rails of an existing conventional treadmill. When the same components are used in this add-on accessory, they have the same numbers with a prime added to those shown in **FIGS. 1** and **2**. Four spaced bracket holders **29**, two of which are shown, are fixed to the underside of platform portion **21'**. The bracket holders **29** have thumb screws **31** with a threaded screw portion that engage the surface of the horizontal bracket sections **33**. At right angles to sections **33** are the vertical bracket sections **35**. Mounted on sections **35** are sleeves **37** with thumb screws **31**. The sleeves **37** may be moved up and down along the length of sections **35** and are fixed in position by the thumb screws **31**. The sleeves **37** allow for the vertical adjustment of the platform **21'** relative to the treadmill.

Extending outwardly from the sleeves **37** and the sections **35** are two U-shaped clamps **39**. The clamps **39** fit on side frame members **41**, shown in dotted line format, of the conventional treadmill. To adjust the angular orientation of the bracket sections **35**, and hence their attached platform **1'**, relative to the treadmill, thumb screws **43** are used. After the user moves the platform to its desired angular orientation, each of the screws **43** is tightened onto the frame members **41** of the treadmill, thereby fixing the platform in that desired orientation.

FIG. 4 is a bottom view of the **FIG. 3** add-on platform portion **21'**, showing four spaced bracket holders **29** used to hold the horizontal bracket sections **33** as shown. Holders **29** each have hollow interiors and a thumb screw **31** which, when turned, has a screw that can engage the bracket section **33** within the holder **29**. Each of the sections **33** are joined at right angles to vertical bracket section **35**, (see **FIG. 3**). Since there is a certain amount of custom fitting of the brackets **29** to the particular frame or other holding structure of the conventional treadmill, the exact number of bracket sections and engaging clamps can vary. The important thing is that the platform can be both vertically adjusted, relative to the treadmill, and also have its angular orientation adjusted with respect to the treadmill. Other bracket configuration may also be possible to accomplish the same dual adjustment of the supported platform by the brackets and their attached clamps, etc.

While disclosed for use with a treadmill, any type of exercising device could be used with the present invention.

Although the preferred embodiment of the present invention and the method of using the same has been described in the foregoing specification with considerable details, it is to be understood that modifications may be made to the invention which do not exceed the scope of the appended claims and modified forms of the present invention done by others skilled in the art to which the invention pertains will be considered infringements of this invention when those modified forms fall within the claimed scope of this invention.